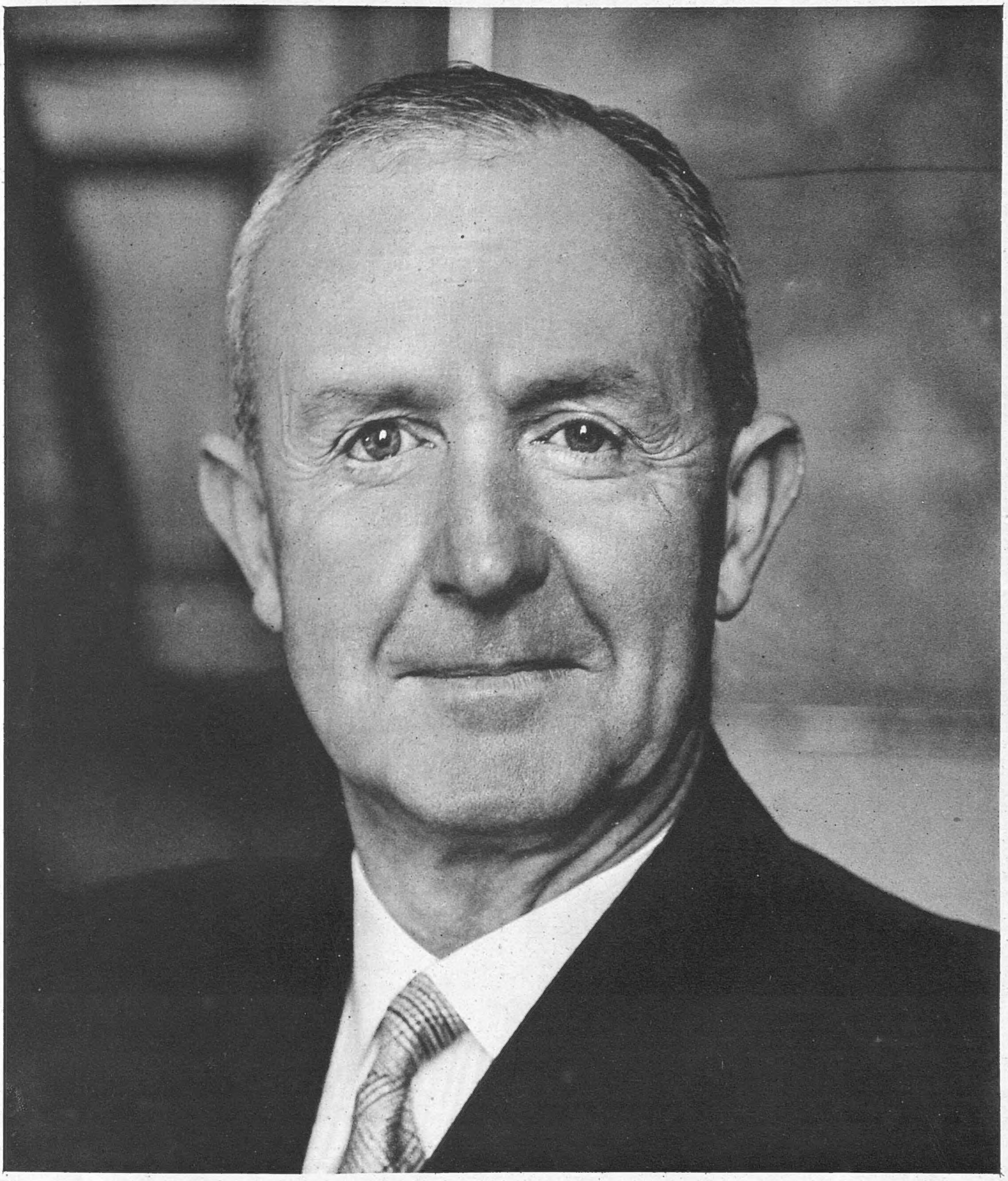
The Sketch

No. 2515—Vol. CXCIV. WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 1941. ONE SHILLING AND THREEPENCE.



CUNNING CUNNINGHAM—
VICTOR OF THE GREAT SEA BATTLE.

The name of ADMIRAL SIR ANDREW BROWNE CUNNINGHAM, G.C.B., D.S.O., *Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean, will live in history as the victor of one of our greatest sea-battles, the action fought in the Eastern Mediterranean, when seven Italian warships were sunk, and our Navy suffered no casualties. The brilliant strategy by which "Orion," acting as a decoy, lured the enemy forces towards the main British Fleet was recently disclosed. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham was awarded the G.C.B. only a few weeks ago, in recognition of the recent victorious combined operations in the Middle East.*

MOTLEY NOTES.

By ALAN KEMP.

They Don't Care. About fifty daffodils in my garden, and legions of them forming up. Crocuses nearly over. Tulips shooting up nicely. Buds and young leaves, all according to plan. Blackbirds and throstles sounding the Raiders Past in the morning. And I had nearly forgotten them!—the first almond-blossoms. It would all be very vernal and stimulating but for two things. One is a slashing north wind, fit only for mid-winter on the Aleutian Islands, and the other is—see if you can guess! You are right—it is the war: I don't know why one should resent it—on the contrary, one ought to be grateful for it—but there is something humiliating in Nature's supercilious indifference to our troubles. Battle, murder and sudden death everywhere, and yet daffodils treat the whole business with complete contempt. Perhaps they are right. Here we are, they say, and if you can't enjoy us sensibly and peacefully—well, don't blame us! We're doing our bit! Their logic is unanswerable.

Clubs and Spades. I hope they aren't snobs. They had to put up with some low company in my garden last year, and they are likely to have more and more of it this year. I had grave doubts whether a tulip would consent to grow beside a beetroot, but so far as I could see, they got on very politely together. When a tulip, the most blue-blooded of flowers, shows this matey spirit, then you have true democracy. I noticed with pleasure the same spirit of liberty, equality and fraternity between the roses and the lettuces. The days of class distinctions in the garden have undoubtedly gone. But this proletarian revolution can be carried too far—as, indeed, most revolutions are. I see that there is a proposal to scatter kitchen-gardens all over golf-courses. No, no—one thing or the other! Plough up golf-courses if you must—turn your niblicks into ploughshares if the national emergency demands it! But don't wantonly increase human suffering by adding cabbage-patches to the hazards! What club, I should like to know, is one expected to use when one's ball reposes amid a forest of brussels sprouts? Spades are a stronger suit than clubs at bridge, but not, please, at golf!

"Oh, don't whistle, old man! I've an awful headache!"

DRAWN BY GEORGE DAVIES.

Farewell, Cinderella! However, what is the use of thinking of either golf or agriculture nowadays? If we need healthy exercise, let us put our energy into housework. And we shall need plenty of it, for, as far as I can see, there will soon be no such thing as domestic service in this country. Obviously, there cannot be as much, and ought not to be as much, as there was. Large domestic staffs must be cut and luxurious establishments must contract. It is, however, easy to say that, but it does not solve all the difficulties. There are many institutions—*e.g.*, hospitals—and many houses containing elderly people which simply cannot function at all without domestic service. But how can the private employer compete with the fantastic wages which are offered in many places for work which is classified—sometimes rather questionably—as war-work? There has been much inconsistency, all pointing to hasty policy, in this matter. First the young women are encouraged to volunteer, and they rush to do so, to ensure finding employment in their own localities; then they are told to stay put in their jobs. The result is sudden paralysis in thousands of households. I cannot persuade myself that this whole scheme for conscription of women has been very clearly thought out. We all realise that essential industries must be recruited by hook or by crook, but it ought to be remembered that domestic work is not the least essential of home industries.

The Fifth Wheel. But I don't suppose Mr. Bevin will be much impressed by that argument, and the wise course for us all is to brush up our housework. I am wondering how I can make myself useful, and I gravely suspect that any well-meant efforts of mine will be brushed aside, at first patiently and tactfully, and then, perhaps, a little brusquely, not to say contemptuously. It is humbling to a man to realise how little he ever knows or sees of the technique of housework. It is all done behind his back. The routine that goes on in my own kitchen is a sealed book to me. Ask me to "do" a room, and I should have to confess that I do not know the drill-movements at all. All I do know is that there is probably a great deal more in it than I have ever realised. I have not the faintest conception what really happens when that convulsion of nature, known as Spring Cleaning, takes place. I am always removed to a safe distance, and when I come back there is comparative calm after the storm, and I have no idea what the hurricane was really like. I should like to be let loose with that amusing plaything, the vacuum cleaner, but I doubt whether I should give satisfaction even with that. Certainly my first efforts have been discouraging. The other morning, in a sudden access of self-sacrifice, I made my own bed. Would you believe it—they said it was the day the sheets were changed, and tore the whole thing to pieces before my eyes! I am still smarting from the giggles and pitying smiles. It is quite untrue to say that having made your bed, you must lie on it. Women won't let you.

"Van Gogh! Van Gogh! That's all you talk about!"

DRAWN BY WESTERN.

The Pedestrian Menace. Lord Newton recently informed a shocked House of Lords that "he never went out without expecting to be knocked down and killed." That seems rather defeatist of him, since he has been knocked down four times in four years, and at the age of eighty-three is alive to tell the tale. If all pedestrians were equally fortunate, the wastage of the roads, which is far worse this year than last, would be less hideous: 689 deaths last February—a casualty-list which the heaviest air-raid would hardly produce. And it isn't all due to speeding. It is even dangerous to walk nowadays, because there are other pedestrians who may involve you in a head-on collision;

and, incredible though it sounds, if one walker walks into another walker, one or both may be killed. Six people came to that improbable end in February, and twenty-two were slain by lamp-posts. Well, as a motorist, I have always held that pedestrians were extremely reckless persons, but it is distressing to find these homicidal tendencies in lamp-posts. The only safe course seems to be never to move at all.

Go It, Grandpa!

By constantly repelling these attacks by the Mechanised Forces, Lord Newton has at least shown that even in the eighties one need not be lacking in agility. As I shall soon be qualifying for that class myself, I am glad to see that the Veterans are beginning to assert themselves against the presumptuous claims of Youth. The Home Guard are a standing challenge to the wounding superiority from which the Old Boys have too long suffered at the hands of the Sixth Form. And now a septuagenarian Member of Parliament, stung by criticisms of Elder Statesmen, has challenged another Member, thirty years younger than himself, to mortal combat in billiards, running, lawn tennis or squash. The challenger, Sir Henry Fildes, has already won the billiards by a magnificent sprint when his opponent was almost breasting the tape, and is fighting-fit for the other events. His system of training, he tells us, is to sleep only three hours a night. The fact ought to be very encouraging to A.R.P. wardens, Jim Crows and other Civil Defence Volunteers.

Fine Old Crusted.

"These lads must be taught their place," says Sir Henry. And again, with a fine note of defiance: "I 'll teach these youngsters." It is time this clarion call came from those who have suffered meekly under taunts of being mere Dug-Outs, Has-Beens and Colonel Blimps. I don't know why it should be a reproach to be dug out; a great many of the most valuable things in the world have to be dug out—not only gold and diamonds, but even carrots and onions. There is a good deal of complaint that our politics, and the war itself, are "run by old men." I rather think that if there were any William Pitts about, the old men would not have been able to keep them down, and, indeed, they would have been only too relieved to yield to them. But where have the Pitts been? I am afraid that as one looks round the world to-day, one cannot be very grateful for the contribution which Youth has been making to humanity. Nazi-ism and Fascism and Bolshevism are not being "run by old men"; unhappily, misguided youth is the mainstay of them all, and will be the greatest danger in the post-war world. There is a hope for us all that in our sixties and seventies we may still be nearly as wise as our children and grandchildren. But I for one earnestly trust that I shall not be expected to justify longevity by sleeping three hours a night and then rising with the lark ready to meet all comers at squash, cross-country running or all-in wrestling. If driven to it, I will defend my honour at bowls, or even darts, but otherwise in all athletic matters I propose to adopt a philosophy of Non-Violence.

A Sporting Event.

And let me assure Sir Henry Fildes that there is nothing to be ashamed of, at any age, in the less acrobatic forms of sports. If his youthful opponent told Sir Henry to go and play marbles, he would probably regard it as another example of cubbish impertinence. And yet marbles is an honourable game, and, what is more, a game for warriors. At all events, it appears that the Army has taken it up with enthusiasm. You were probably not aware that every Good Friday, at Tinsley Green, in Sussex, there takes place one of the oldest tournaments in the country—the Marbles Championship. If anybody supposes that this is a "sissy" event, let him note that strong and eager teams are entered this year from the Canadian Army and the Newfoundland Artillery. Let him also note that there is a manly prize for this manly sport—namely, a cask of beer—and let us hope that for the victors everything will be all beer and marbles. It is gratifying to know that this fine old British sport, which many of us have neglected for more years than we care to reckon, is still in full vigour. Truth to tell, I thought it was dead. It seems a very long time since I saw a team of urchins engaged in a marble-tourney, in the grand old manner that I remember. And what has happened to tops? It seems an age since I saw one. But England is tenacious of her pastimes, and it would not surprise me to learn that in some remote village the stalwarts still assemble for the All England Championship of top-spinning, hopscotch, pea-shooting and catapulting.

"*I say, what's happened to our paper this morning?*"

DRAWN BY TERNENT.

Where are the Pins of Yesteryear?

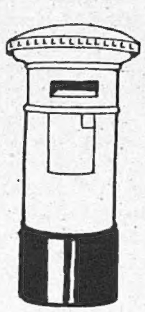
How war changes our values! Nobody with any economic sense would now refer to "two pins" with that old, thoughtless, pre-war contempt which was unjustly poured upon pins. Two pins are definitely two objects of value to-day, because, if you waste them, there are only two hundred and forty-nine million nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight left for the whole of an England which is hungering for pins. You think that an adequate allowance? Not if you remember (as you doubtless do remember) that in happier days England somehow found a use for five thousand million pins every year, not to mention six million pounds of safety-pins and three hundred and seventy million hair-pins. (And some of us, looking for pipe-cleaners, had thought that the hair-pin was practically extinct!) Half a million pounds a year was spent by the British public in pins. The mystery is, what became of them all? Pins don't melt or evaporate; yet every year millions and millions of pins seem to have vanished into nothingness. Let us have a National Pin Day. A well-organised pin-hunt throughout the population would produce mountains of metal for munitions. Now, then, Mr. Morrison!

Careless Talk.

The Censor is a fellow of infinite jest, and many are the tales that are told of his sprightly imagination. A friend of mine has just been severely reprimanded by him. Certain by-roads near his house have fallen into disrepair, especially under winter rains. Writing to one of his children overseas, he was wicked enough to say: "Our lane has become a regular series of tank-traps." The letter was returned, bulging with the most ferocious warnings about giving information to the enemy. He has tried to explain, but the Censor is not to be mollified, and he now goes about with a haunted look, expecting at any moment to be clapped into Brixton under Regulation 18B. Poor old Censor! After all, he—and by "he" I mean hundreds of him—has got to live, and we mustn't be too hard on his flights of imagination, assuming that once in a thousand times he deprives the enemy of something which really is "information." But does he? I wonder!

Please forward

By JOYCE DENNYS.



MY DEAR ROBERT—Charles held a stirrup-pump practice on the lawn after lunch on Sunday.

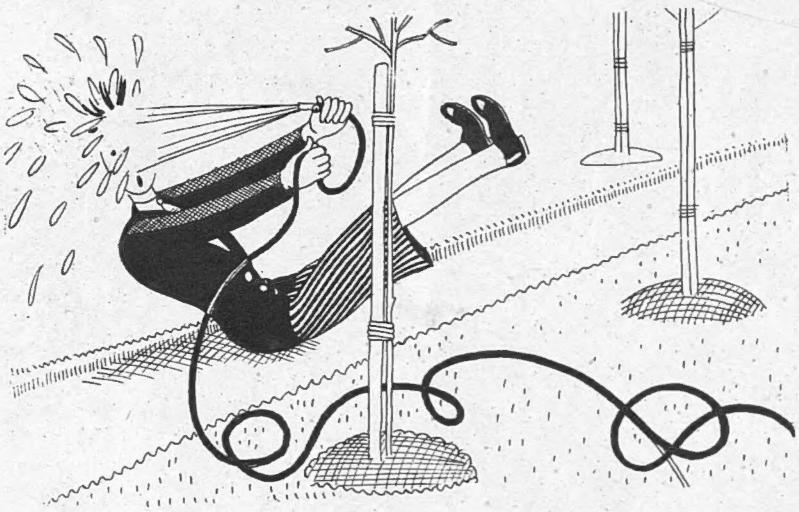
"Now, you, Henrietta, had better be on the hose, which is practically foolproof," he said kindly.

"Yes, Charles."

"All you have to do is to crawl along with the dustbin lid in one hand and the hose-pipe in the other, taking care to keep your head not more than three inches from the ground, and with your gas-mask ready to be put on at a moment's notice."

"It sounds too easy," I said.

"As a matter of fact, it's perfectly simple," said Charles. "You use the spray on a bomb and the jet on burning woodwork. Just press this brass thing, and it changes from one to the other."



"*A stream of water caught me in the face.*"

"How do I know which is the spray and which is the jet?" I said.

"Try both," said Charles patiently, "and then you can see for yourself."

"Oh, yes; of course."

"The Lodger had better pump," said Charles, "'for though she's little, yet she's fierce.'"

"Like Hermia," said the Lodger.

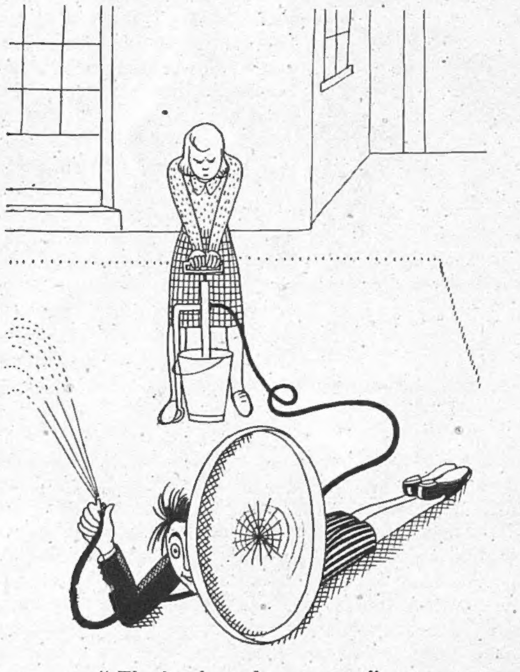
"You've been educated," said Charles admiringly.

"And what are you going to do, Charles?" I said.

"I shall probably be at the Hospital, so it's no good counting on me," said Charles. "You women have got to stop the place burning down somehow. Now then, Henrietta, down you go."

"It's very damp," I said, looking distastefully at the lawn, on which several large pink worms were crawling.

"Don't be a coward. Down you go."



"*The jet changed to a spray.*"

"What shall I do?" said Charles's mother, who is staying with us just now, and had come out to see what was happening.

Charles looked at her thoughtfully. "You'd better run to and fro with refill buckets of water," he said.

"O.K.", said Grannie, and trotted off.

"Perhaps you'd better bring half a bucket at a time," shouted Charles. "After all, she is eighty-four," he added to himself in an undertone.

Suddenly my spirits soared up like a rocket. How could Hitler ever dream for one single moment that there was the slightest chance of defeating people like us? I flung myself down on to the ground, and with the dustbin lid in one hand, began crawling towards a statue of Diana which occupies a dignified position in the middle of the rose-garden. I pressed the brass lever this way and that, but nothing happened. Then I turned round and saw the Lodger, very red in the face and pumping madly, and Grannie coming across the lawn with another bucket. Various gurgling noises came from the hose-pipe, but there wasn't a sign of either jet or spray.

"I think it must be stopped up somewhere," I said, and sat up and applied my eye to the lever.

Immediately a stream of water caught me in the face and knocked me over sideways.

"That was the jet," said Charles, who sounded amused.

Blindly I groped for the hose-pipe, which I could hear hissing merrily on the ground not far off.

"Oi! Mind my trousers!" shouted Charles.

When I had blinked the water out of my eyes, I began another stealthy advance on Diana.

"That's near enough," said Charles. "They explode sometimes."

A gratifying stream poured from the hose, and little rivulets of water poured down Diana, who, I fancied, looked a little pained at the treatment she was receiving. I pressed the lever, and the jet changed to a spray, which fell soft as a blessing on her bent head.

"Water!" said the Lodger faintly, and I heard Grannie emptying her bucket.

I changed the spray back again to the jet, and took a pot-shot at a blackbird which was hopping about on the lawn. The blackbird flew away squawking angrily. I hadn't been so happy since the war started.

"Enjoying yourself?" said Charles.

"I could go on for ever," I said fervently.

"I couldn't," said the Lodger, and stopped pumping.

"It works beautifully, Charles," I said, and sat up to find I had been lying on a worm.

Last Wednesday I found Lady B. in her greenhouse, repotting chrysanthemums. "I am enjoying myself so much," she said apologetically. "Of course, one oughtn't to take one's attention off the onions for one single minute, but I couldn't bear to see these poor things suffering any more. Look at that!" she said triumphantly, as she heaved one out of its pot and held it up for me to see.

It was indeed a sorry sight. The roots had pressed on a hopeless quest for freedom all round the sides, and had even grown, in a pathetic cascade, out of the hole at the bottom of the flower-pot.

"That's just exactly how I feel," I said, deeply moved by the spectacle.

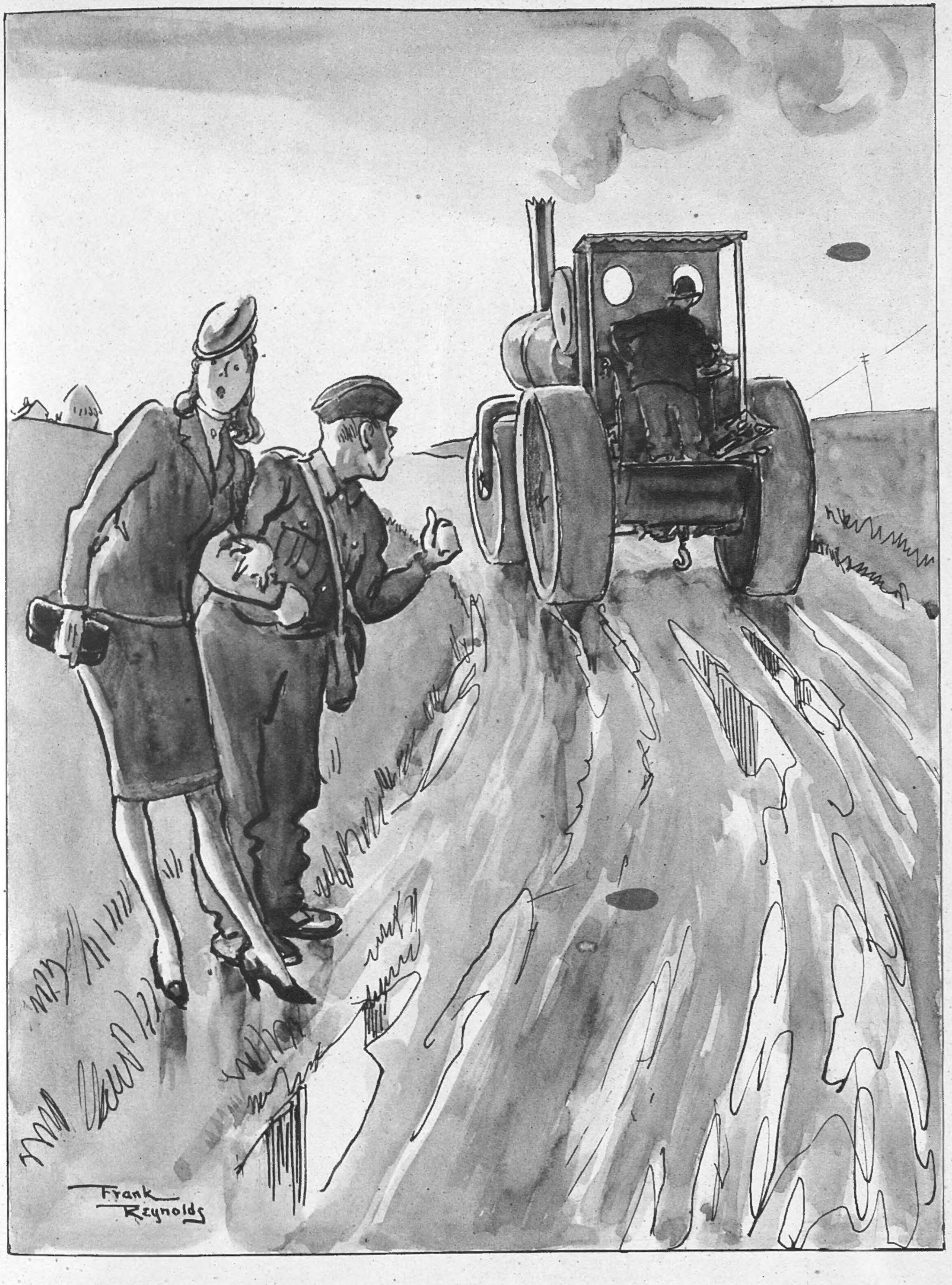
Lady B. looked at me for a moment, and then began putting fine mould into the large and spacious pot which was to be the chrysanthemum's new home.

"It *is* awful, never getting away," she said. "But, after all, it's better to be bodily pot-bound than mentally pot-bound, like the Germans. Mentally *and* spiritually pot-bound," she said, enjoying the expression, and we went in to tea strangely comforted.

"*I found Lady B. in her greenhouse.*"

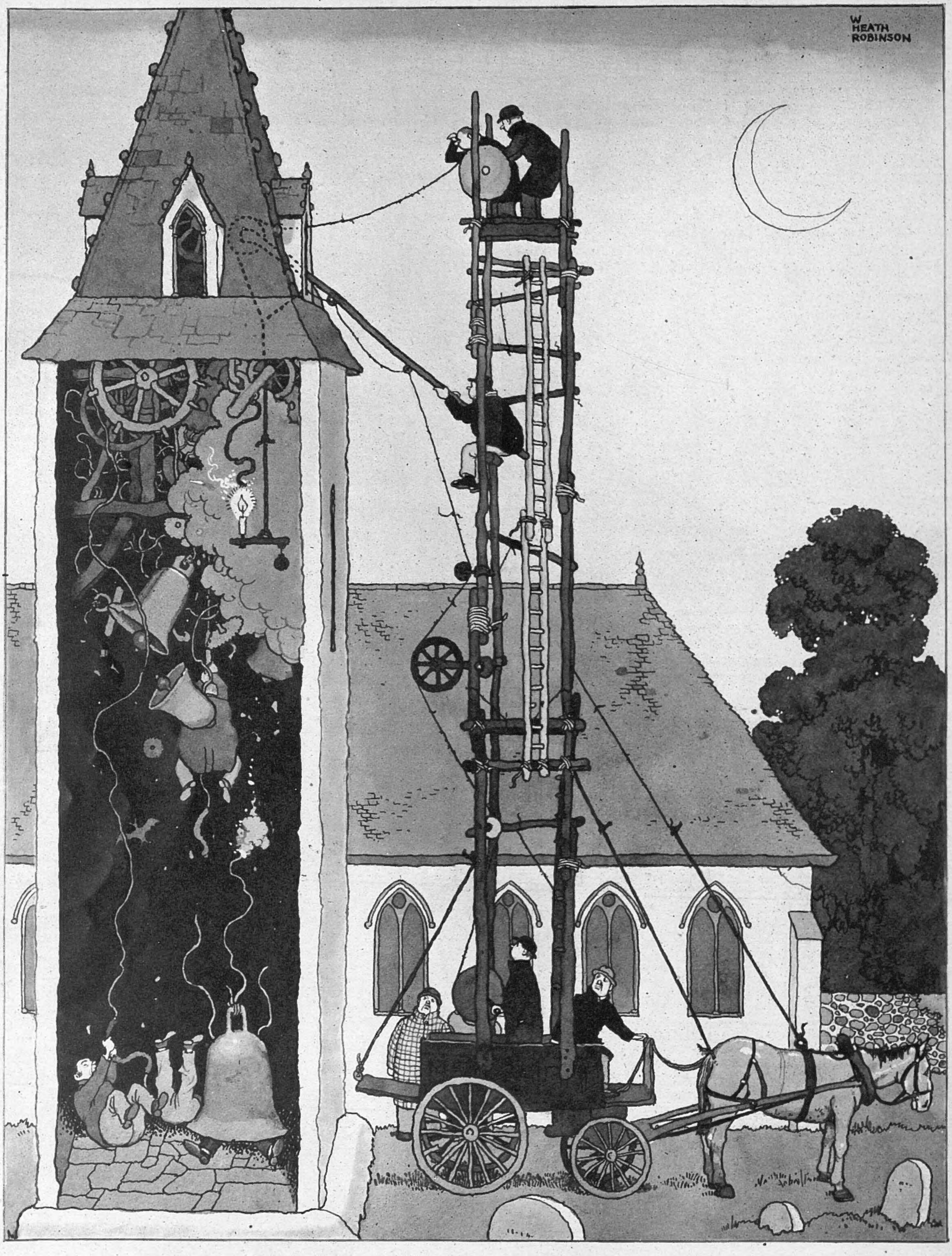
Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.



"'E'S GIVE US THE GO-BY! WELL, OF ALL THE RUDDY SNOBS!"

DRAWN BY FRANK REYNOLDS.



INVASION BELLS AND THE FIFTH COLUMN.

This week Mr. W. Heath Robinson strikes a serious note of warning. His drawing illustrates what might well be a perilous moment in British history, for it shows how a Gang of Spies could attempt to disguise themselves as innocent country folk and succeed in stopping the ringing of the church bells in warning of attempted invasion. Be on your guard!

DRAWN BY W. HEATH ROBINSON.

ROYAL DUCHESS VISITS THE LAND GIRLS.

H.R.H. the DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER *recently visited the Women's Land Army Training at the Institute of Agriculture, Moulton, Northants, and watched the girls doing such jobs as loading up farm-wagons.*

The royal visitor sees how an orphaned lamb, being brought up by hand, gets its bottle from a Land Girl.

MISS MILDRED PARKER, *county hockey player, tells H.R.H. what it's like to drive a tractor.*

Left: A demonstration of the skilled art of pruning fruit-trees, an important part of the curriculum.

CINEMA CAMEOS.

By C. A. LEJEUNE.

THE most unusual film of this or many weeks past is "VICTORY" (Plaza), from the Joseph Conrad novel of ideals and adventure in the sticky South Seas. It is possibly a little more unusual than the producers reckoned for, since they have done their best to make recognisable movie material of it—the sort of film for which South of This, and East of That, and West of the Other Place have comfortably prepared us.

Eden Phillpotts' play "The Farmer's Wife," which had a run of over 1300 performances, is on the screen at the Regal, with a first-rate cast. Samuel Sweetland (BASIL SYDNEY), *a West Country farmer, prosperous and a widower, buys Applegarth Farm at an auction, and decides to get married again. He has three false tries, first with a rich, sporting widow, who turns him down at once; then an old maid, who gives him the same answer; and the local barmaid says "No" too. With pride sorely hurt, he goes off to the village cattle and flower show to forget his trio of disastrous courtships, and, tackling a bull which runs amok, finds himself a hero. This, for some reason, turns his thoughts to another eligible—the quiet and efficient Araminta* (NORA SWINBURNE), *who quietly and efficiently accepts his proposal.*

Conrad, if we remember rightly, had a lot to say about "the obscure prompting of that pagan residuum of awe and wonder which lurks still at the bottom of our old humanity." All that is out. There is nothing obscure about "Victory" now, except certain details of the plot that seem to have been insufficiently explained in the carry-over to the filmscript. It is a more or less straightforward narrative of love and skulduggery in Surabaya and thereabouts. Fredric March, as the handsome hero (though heavily moustached), and Sir Cedric Hardwicke, as the cad of the piece, make no mystery about the nature of their parts. And there is a fade-out embrace which may well make sturdy admirers of Conrad gnash their teeth and groan. But, for all its tribute to the conventions, "Victory" is still an unusual film.

The film opens in a seedy hotel in Surabaya, where an English Ladies' Orchestra is playing waltzes. The time is 1902, or thereabouts, and the "girls," mainly toothy, spectacled and middle-aged, wear well-corseted white gowns with tartan ribbons slung across their chests. One member of the band, though, the pianist, is neither *passée* nor plain. This is Alma (Betty Field), not yet twenty, mousy but desirable, and terribly out of place in this resort of the South Seas. Pursued by the hotel proprietor, who wants her for His Own (breakfast in Room 6), she throws herself on the mercy of a complete stranger, one Axel Heyst (Fredric March), who is taking his last drink before going off to the island where he lives as a recluse with his memories. This Heyst is an odd fellow, a stoic who has been involved against his will in a company swindle. Courtly, kindly and a little tired, he asks no questions, simply sweeps Alma off to his island and sets her up as housewife there.

Love dawns, of course, between the two, but before it can become an urgent problem, the villains arrive; three of them, killers, adventurers and gamblers—a Mr. Jones (Sir Cedric Hardwicke), with dark glasses and sensuous lines round his mouth; his "secretary," who loves women; and his body-servant, a dumb brute, half-ape, half-human. These three, who suspect the quiet Heyst of hiding the profits of his swindle, raise merry hell in the island of Samburan. The mousy Alma puts on her best dress, a gift from an appreciative sultan, and plays a Tosca rôle. In one of the best-managed thunderstorms I ever remember seeing on the screen, the villains are bumped off, one by one. "Victory" is Miss Fields' film. Whether in the hunted scenes of the opening section, or in the more sultry moments of the island crisis, she is quite first-rate. We had a hint of what she could do with a stormy part in "Of Mice and Men." Now, in a part more delicate and varied, she looks like becoming the screen's modern Ruth Chatterton.

ENID STAMP-TAYLOR *plays Mary Hearn, barmaid of the "local." The scene shows a moment's flirtation with Churdles Ash* (WILFRID LAWSON), *who has used all his eloquence to prevent his master from marrying again.*

"NO TIME FOR COMEDY" (Warner), which comes into the West End cinema simultaneously with its stage run, is a smart shop-window for the talents of such comedians as Rosalind Russell, James Stewart, Charlie Ruggles and Genevieve Tobin. Having James Stewart in the cast, it has naturally been stretched a little from the original Behrman play, to give Mr. Stewart the chance for his celebrated country-bumpkin-come-to-town act. As a hayseed playwright, with an inspired comedy success in his pocket, he does the opening scenes beautifully, and contrives, throughout the piece, to keep up his boyish freshness. The later scenes, in which the playwright's marriage with his leading lady (Miss Russell) goes on the rocks because of his yearning for more spiritual drama, and the platonic interest of a blonde, have a few tiresome moments. But the acting of the principals already mentioned, plus Allyn Joslyn's as a stage director, and Louise Beavers' as a stupendous coloured maid, pulls the piece through, and on the whole "No Time for Comedy" has no time for yawning.

"MR. AND MRS. SMITH" (New Gallery) is a comedy of marriage, too, and, oddly enough, it was made by Alfred Hitchcock, who hasn't indulged himself with straight comedy for a long, long time. It recounts the difficult predicament of David Smith (Robert Montgomery), who learns, after four years of blissful but anguished matrimony, that he isn't really married to his wife, Ann (Carole Lombard), and has to woo her all over again. David, a whimsical fellow, prefers the slightly illicit approach. Ann, a stout feminist, stands out for a woman's rights. She goes to work, she takes up with her ex-husband's partner, and the trio have to go all the way to a snowbound mountain hut to put things right. It 's deft enough, and near-naughty, but it 's hardly the film we expect from the man who made "Rebecca" and "Foreign Correspondent."

"FLIGHT COMMAND" (Empire) isn't funny at all—rather it is one of the incidents in the career of a Pensacola cadet which we think might have been overlooked. This upstanding youth (Robert Taylor) is attached to a flying squadron known as the Hell Cats, and goes down badly with them from the beginning. The climax of his troubles arrives when he is suspected of making a pass at the Commander's wife (Ruth Hussey). He is innocent, of course, but the Squadron cuts him to a man, won't talk or play with him. In the end, naturally, he saves the Commander's life with a special fog-landing device bequeathed him by the Commander's wife's brother, and his resignation is refused, and everything is hotsy-totsy. Admirers of Mr. Robert Taylor will like to see him up in the clouds, singing and piloting his tricky craft. Others must just get what excitement they can from the formation flying.

At the cattle and flower show of "The Farmer's Wife" is a rifle range where bucolic youth of the district tries its luck.

PHOTOGRAPH BY YEVONDE.

THE FUTURE LADY ANDREW CAVENDISH.

The marriage of the HON. DEBORAH MITFORD, *youngest daughter of Lord and Lady Redesdale, to Lord Andrew Cavendish, Coldstream Guards, younger son of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire, is fixed to take place on Saturday, April 19, at St. Bartholomew-the-Great, Smithfield. Miss Mitford is here posed with a favourite whippet, which wears her pearls with grace and insouciance.*

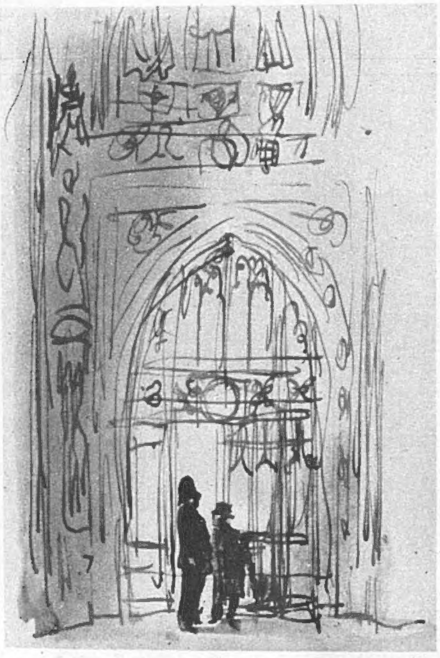
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN WARTIME.

By THEODORA BENSON and BETTY ASKWITH.

Authors of "Foreigners; or the World in a Nutshell."

ILLUSTRATED BY TOPOLSKI.

THERE is no doubt at all that the English do it very well. That is the first sensation one gets from visiting the House of Commons. What if the setting is a sham Gothic building, full of second-rate statuary and bad stained glass, and impregnated with the most peculiar, though not unpleasant, smell of drying plaster? What if the Members of the House are, individually, just men, not always beautiful, well dressed or impressive? For some unknown reason—perhaps because they are part of the unquestioned tradition of centuries, perhaps because they are practised almost daily, so that no one feels awkward or unaccustomed in his rôle, or perhaps because they do enshrine something that is vital, part of the living England—all the flap-doodle, if one may use such a word, the traditions and ceremonials of the House of Commons, instead of seeming archaic, fusty and a little childish, are right, natural and invested with an almost unbelievable dignity.



Impressive architecture . . . impressive policemen.

The doors from the lobby into the House stand open. "Hats off, Strangers!" intones a policeman, in a beautiful, bell-like, clerical voice. A figure can be seen bowing to the empty Speaker's chair. "The Mace," it announces, and the little procession files through the lobby. The Trainbearer, in black knee-breeches and white ruffles, with swelling port and erect dignity, walks first. Then comes the Serjeant-at-Arms, also in Court dress, bowed beneath the weight of the heavy gold Mace carried on his shoulder. The Speaker should follow, but on the day we were there he was ill, and the Deputy Speaker is only permitted to skip round somewhere at the back and emerge into his chair as the Mace reaches the Table. Then: "Deputy Speaker in the Chair," calls someone, and the phrase is passed on, again by the policemen in superb intonation, from the House to the lobby, and goes echoing away right into the Central Hall. Another day of democratic government swings into action.

There is just possibly a latent danger in all this. Once inside the House of Commons, a Member is an immensely important person, not in himself, but because he "belongs." He is part of the charmed circle, and all rights and privileges are his; and inside that green leather Chamber rights and privileges are very important. To have belonged there, and to have got thrown out, must make one feel like a Peri outside Paradise. And the danger is that Paradise may become too out of touch with the ordinary world. We have all heard of leaders who have not seemed to do much in the way of governing the country, but of whom their followers murmured a little wistfully that they were "great Parliamentarians." And it seems possible that there is a sort of Trades Unionism in the House of Commons which makes even the most bitterly hated right honourable friend on the bench opposite more considered and regarded than the best brain outside these walls.

All the same, there is a great deal to be said for our way of government.

"This," said the kind Member who took us up and settled us in the Ladies' Gallery, "is the most important hour in Europe."

It was Question Time, and the House was at this moment roaring with laughter over one of its own private jokes. There was rather a Lower Fifth atmosphere about the right honourable gentlemen, but we saw at once the truth that lay behind the Member's statement. For in this hour, everything can be said, everything can be brought up: from a question as to whether the machinery that exists for production purposes is functioning with efficiency and obtaining the maximum production with the minimum of friction, to a question about the eviction of Mrs. Bridgman, of Logan Street, Glasgow. It is the old right of bringing matters "even unto Cæsar," and trivial and silly as it may occasionally seem, Question Time in the House, with its mixture of enquiry, criticism and appeal, is—well, just one of those things for which we fight a major war.

The Ministers arrive: MR. ATTLEE, *the Lord Privy Seal and Deputy Leader of the House, and* LORD SIMON, *the Lord Chancellor (right).*

The PRIME MINISTER, *the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, with full equipment, including cigar.*

We were intrigued trying to recognise and sum up various personalities. There were only two women Members in the House—Miss Rathbone, in sober black, who leapt frequently to her feet, and Dr. Summerskill, looking rather decorative in green, with reddish-gold hair piled on top of her head, who remained immobile on a back bench. On the front Government bench, Mr. Herbert Morrison seemed well able to handle questions, almost to enjoy them. Sir Kingsley Wood shoved his head into his papers and muttered. The strong Scottish accent of the Secretary of State for Scotland reverberated across the Chamber, clashing with the even stronger Scotch of Mr. Buchanan.

We were amused, too, at the different ways people felt about the answers they received. Sometimes it seemed enough for them to have loosed their question and got it off their chests; but the Member for Cambridge University spoke in a sharp, almost peevish, tone when he asked: "Can't I have an answer to my question?"; and Commander Sir Archibald Southby hammered the Government with the air of a slightly disagreeable bulldog pinning down a somewhat shuffling and timid bull.

It was somehow a strange moment. The House was secure, peaceful, dignified—even a little slow. The routine of business went on. There were calls of "Order, order, order!" as someone phrased his supplementary question wrongly. And yet Mr. Morrison had just replied to an honourable Member that we should not be the *first* to use poison gas. England does it well.

AN ARTIST LOOKS AT THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN WARTIME.

Uniforms gathered together in the Lobby.

A view of the Lobby, with its Gothic-style windows.

The Ladies' Gallery: a quintet of well-contrasted types of youth and maturity.

This week FELIKS TOPOLSKI, the Polish artist, visited the House of Commons, and has recorded his impressions of this famous British Institution as it appears in wartime. The dignity of the traditional ceremonial of the House, and the special atmosphere, are described by the Hon. Betty Askwith and the Hon. Theodora Benson in an article on our facing page, while here Topolski gives brilliant impressions of the Lobby, and of the well-contrasted types of visitor he saw framed in the 19th-century Gothic of the Ladies' Gallery.

DRAWINGS BY TOPOLSKI.

AMUSING, UNUSUAL AND ATTRACTIVE PICTURES.

Driving a Post Office mail-van in London is strenuous work, but MRS. H. FURLEY *looks as if she enjoyed it. She's a pioneer in this job, for which women are being recruited.*

The Squadron to which this young Canadian officer belongs has given HITLER 169 "KICKS IN THE PANTS" *in the shape of one for each machine shot down. Hence the spirited Squadron badge.*

Service with the forces has not prevented artists from producing pictures to submit to the Royal Academy. LEADING A/C E. A. FOSDIKE *brought two works along.*

MISS CECILIA COLLEDGE, *the well-known skater and English Champion, accompanied* SQUADRON LEADER HUGH R. BLACK *when he went to Buckingham Palace to be invested with his A.F.C. by the King.*

MISS MARY EDEN COLLINGWOOD, *of Wandsworth A.R.P., has submitted two works to the Royal Academy this year, and is seen arriving with them.*

Twenty-year-old MISS DEIRDRE HENTY-CREER, *sister of camera-man Henty-Creer, has been painting in the studio at Denham during shooting of "49th Parallel." Her picture "Old Chelsea" was hung in last year's Royal Academy.*

GREEK FILM-STAR MME. ELINA BULGARIDES ALHADEFF'S *baby was christened in London. His father saw the event in Athens by radio-ed photograph relayed via New York.* CAPTAIN MATESSIS *was godfather.*

MISS J. B. G. FRAZER-NASH, *younger daughter of Captain A. Frazer-Nash, armament designer, is engaged to Flt. Lieut. J. N. Watts-Farmer, D.F.C., R.A.F.*

MISS JOCELYN MARGOT GAVIN, *only daughter of Flying Officer Ian Gavin, is engaged to Captain John Miles Burton, R.A.*

H.R.H. *the* PRINCESS ROYAL *stuck a flag in the "Gifts from Overseas" map at the W.V.S. H.Q. to mark an American Red Cross gift of £2000.*

NOTABLE AND CHARMING PERSONALITIES.

H.M. QUEEN GERALDINE OF ALBANIA *attended a concert given by the boys of Buckingham College, Harrow. Speech Room at Harrow School was lent for the occasion.* MR. PRICE-HODGES, *Headmaster of Buckingham College, is on the extreme right.*

FLYING OFFICER FRANCIS N. BEAUFORT-PALMER *and* MRS. BEAUFORT-PALMER *with their Chow Harriet. He is a son of the late Sir F. Beaufort-Palmer.*

LIEUT. MICHAEL W. B. CRAIG WALLER, R.N., *elder son of Vice-Admiral Craig Waller, married* MISS PATRICIA CARY NICHOLLS, *younger daughter of Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Percival Nicholls.*

MISS MARGARET ALINE EDWARDS *married* SECOND LIEUTENANT ALAN PENNINGTON, *the Olympic runner and ex-President of the Oxford University Athletic Club, at St. Mary's Church, Barnes.*

THE CAMERA ROVES IN WAR-TIME:

It was pretty chilly racing at Nottingham, so MRS. PETER ALLEN *(left) and* MISS PEGGY JOHNSON *did their racing standing by the brazier—at least, during part of the day.*

Right: "Hoops over!" MISS EVELYN FORMAN'S *negro Mammy helps her into her crinoline for the Pilgrimage Garden Club's annual spring tour through old Natchez.*

"Hold your breath!" Pulling the waist tightly round MISS EVELYN FORMA[N]'S *waist. Natchez ladies wear pre-Civil W[ar] styles of the South when they do th[e] spring tour of Natchez.*

GAS-MASK DRILL *has—very wisely—been instituted in a well-known Bayswater store. All employees must put their respirators on, and customers are asked to conform to the rule—with the above results!*

MISS MITZI STROTHER, *of Miami, "Miss Florida, 1941," hol[ds] the trophy her blonde, stream-lined, nineteen-year-old beau[ty] has won. She's competing for the title of "Miss America.*

A CHOICE HAND-PICKED PICTURE MIXTURE.

These girls are not up aloft in the rigging of a ship. They are members of a troupe of AERIAL ACROBATS climbing up against the fleecy background of the sky, for their apparatus has been set up out of doors.

Right: Another view of the AERIALISTS, who certainly know their ropes! They are members of the Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus, and have been in winter quarters in Florida. They were due to open in New York early this month.

THESE, TAPIRS, *though rationed, can still have a nice midday meal which a visitor to Whipsnade is offering them.*

Don't let your mouth water too badly though these girls are about to see how much ORANGE CHIFFON PIE *they can eat at Tampa's Botanical Park pie carnival! There are 125 lb. of sugar, 4 bushels of oranges and 400 eggs in this slice—but we'll have sugar, oranges and eggs again one day!*

MR. WILLIAM BARNETT, *of the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals of the Poor, rescues bombed dogs, with the aid of Beauty, his wire-haired terrier. The bandaged dogs are grateful patients.*

"WRENS" ON THE KITCHEN FRONT: PR

Going on duty at 8 a.m.

QUARTERED in the house that was once Charles Dickens's home, somewhere in Kent, are twenty girls, some of the first probationer "Wrens" to take the nine-weeks course in the whole art and practice of cooking, arranged for the Women's Royal Naval Service in one of the Royal Naval Cookery Schools. The girls, who will pass out as either Officers' Cooks or General Mess Cooks, are being taught the skilful way of handling food both in small and large quantities, the way to use

[Continued opposite.

In the lecture-room—a demonstration in frying.

Wash up as you go! The art of clearing up.

General messing; the hot closet for cooked foods. The standardised dishes hold rations for sixteen.

Sausages for the barracks—filling the skins.

Eight sausages to the pound insures the correct size.

ATIONERS IN A ROYAL NAVAL COOKERY SCHOOL.

A practical lesson in carving.

Rolling the Swiss roll.

Cake-making in batches of two—sifting flour and creaming butter by hand.

Slicing meat in the right way—with the grain.

Continued.]
materials to best advantage, avoiding all waste, and how to cater for numbers without rough service, but with attractively served and properly flavoured dishes. Preparation of vegetables, cutting up meat, apportioning rations and carving are all taught, and the curriculum includes pastry-, cake- and bread-making. At the end of the course, conducted by Petty Officer Stevens, who has had twenty-five years' experience in Service and civilian cooking, there is an examination. The girls are all exceptionally keen. The training, which is preliminary to the practical experience which the girls will get during the war service, will stand them in good stead when they return to civilian life.

The examination! Candidates watch as their dishes are examined—and tasted—before marks are awarded.

Right: No waste—the swill is carefully collected.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

VICE-ADMIRAL H. D. PRIDHAM-WIPPELL—*for his morning flirtation with the Wops as he lured them into the mouth of the lion.*

LIEUT. G. R. G. WATKINS—*for the Nelson touch in his radio message: " Shall I board her or blow her stern off ? "*

PRIVATE A. FROST—*for his elevating way with a mortar.*

H. ST. GEORGE SAUNDERS—*for writing the history of the conflict in which " so much was owed by so many to so few."*

CORPORAL C. HILL—*for his weatherwise entry to an Air Force cookery examination.*

IN the great naval victory in the Mediterranean, VICE-ADMIRAL H. D. PRIDHAM-WIPPELL, in H.M.S. " Orion," lured an Italian battleship of the newest " Littorio " class, with cruisers and destroyers, towards our Fleet for summary action. Having spent the morning " flirting " with the Italians and dodging heavy shells, he said: " A number of 15-inch ' bricks ' from the Italian battleship fell close to the ' Orion,' but she escaped without chipping her paint."

PRIVATE A. FROST, of the Royal Sussex Regiment, is a man of Samson-like strength. He can lift with ease and pride the entire equipment of a 3-inch mortar—the heaviest infantry weapon of the British Army. He is a Sussex man, hailing from Brighton, where the bracing air makes men strong !

THE Royal Air Force are very particular about the feeding of their men, and the R.A.F. School of Cookery, which in peace time used to train 300 students a year, now passes out 7000 a year. The clever [*Continued opposite.*

Continued.]
windmill entry submitted by CORPORAL HILL for his examination was made of pastry of which the flour was 30 per cent. potato.

LIEUTENANT G. R. G. WATKINS, commander of the destroyer " Havock," who was trailing an Italian cruiser in the Battle of Matapan last week radio-ed the following message to Admiral Cunningham C.-in-C. the Mediterranean Fleet: " I am hanging on the stern of the Italian cruiser ' Pola.' Shall I board her or blow her stern off with depth-charges ? I have no torpedoes left." Lieutenant Watkins is thirty this is his first command, and he had held it exactl three weeks when she went into this action.

MR. HILARY ST. GEORGE SAUNDERS, wh wrote " The Battle of Britain "—the epic stor of the R.A.F. defence of our country from August t October 1940—is a civilian member of the Air Ministr Intelligence, and a writer of thrillers, who was helpe in its writing by his colleagues. Probably the succes of this—the greatest thriller ever written—has give Mr. Saunders the biggest thrill he has had for a long time

"ROAD SHOW," due at the London Pavilion on April 7, is a high-spirited comedy of circus life. Colonel Carraway (ADOLPHE MENJOU) is playing the "big cat" in a rehearsal of the lion-taming act of Drogo Gaines (JOHN HUBBARD).

"Road Show": Penguin Moore (CAROL LANDIS) owns the circus which Drogo has joined on escaping from the sanatorium in which his outraged fiancée has had him confined.

"Road Show": CAROL LANDIS as the fascinating circus girl who owns the Road Show which Drogo and Colonel Carraway, the eccentric millionaire, have joined.

"VIRGINIA," Paramount's new picture in Technicolor, due at the Carlton Theatre on April 6, is a romance of the South. CAROLYN LEE plays Pretty Elliott, the daughter of the hero, Stonewall Elliott, and almost steals the picture from the stars.

"Virginia": MADELEINE CARROLL as "Charlie" Dunterry, heiress to an estate which she means to sell. On visiting her heritage, she falls in love with Southern life—and with a Southern man.

"Virginia": Stonewall Elliott (FRED MacMURRAY) Southern landowner whose estate marches with that of "Charlie." He is unhappily married, but has a delightful baby daughter, Pretty.

"ROAD SHOW," CIRCUS FUN; "VIRGINIA," SOUTHERN ROMANCE.

NEW YORK MOBILISES THE STARS FOR US:

The Queen of the "Carnival for Britain": twen[...]
chosen from forty-eight models, each hailing fr[...]

The vast audience of 6500 people stands as the National Anthems of Great Britain and the U.S.A. are played.

Left: GRACIE FIELDS *singing "There'll Always be an England."*

Right: Another study of GRACIE FIELDS *singing some of her famous songs.*

HELEN HAYES, *first lady of the American stage, as Queen*

NEW YORK'S biggest entertainment for the "Aid Britain" campaign was the great "Carnival for Britain" which was held at Radio City Music Hall in Rockefeller Centre, the world's biggest theatre, before an audience of 6500 people. Such famous stage personalities as Helen Hayes, Gracie Fields,

Left: The parade of the British War Veterans of America with their colours.

"CARNIVAL FOR BRITAIN" AT RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL.

one-year-old ANN SCOTT, *a different State.*

The grand finale, with the Prince of Wales (MONTY WOOLLY) *and Queen Victoria* (HELEN HAYES) *in the foreground.*

Left: GRACIE FIELDS—*a characteristic and charming singing study.*

Right: GRACIE FIELDS, *whose songs were among the most popular numbers.*

Victoria, with GRACIE FIELDS, *waiting their cues to go on.*

Peggy Wood, Ethel Waters and others gave scenes from their Broadway smash-hits, and Bill Robinson, most famous tap-dancer, appeared, as well as many others. Nearly £20,000 was raised for British War charities. Gertrude Lawrence, who is pictured on another page, also appeared at the great Carnival.

Right: Queen Victoria (HELEN HAYES), *with the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII.* (MONTY WOOLLY).

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

THE present century has produced few novelists capable of being compared with the masters of the last; and the chief cause of this is, not that our novelists are necessarily inferior, but that their subject-matter lacks the stability essential for a work of fiction. The structure of society may not have changed as much as some people think, but it has changed and is still changing; and often, even when it has not changed in actual fact, it has changed in the minds of men. Some novelists ignore the change, some accept it; others, expecting further developments, write as prophets and idealists of society they hope to see established. But in describing the world of to-day they are all in the bewildering position of travellers on a war-time road, without signposts or milestones or points of reference to guide them. Art is order, the order that the artist imposes on experience; when achieved, it expresses his vision of truth. But that order, and the unity of outlook from which it proceeds, must have a counterpart in the outside world. If it has none, if the meaning of things is to be sought in chaos and not in order, then the artist is at a grave disadvantage and he may lose faith, just as a carpenter would lose faith if he were given the materials to make a chair and at the same time told that no such object as a chair existed. Art now is like a game as to whose rules none of the players can agree; they discard old ones, they invent new ones, they go without rules altogether; and they are not to be blamed, because this is precisely what the world around them is doing. Meanwhile the game languishes. The work of James Joyce, or the work of the Surrealists, is an effort, and a genuine effort, to bring art into harmony with chaos; but surely chaos and art are antithetical, there is no compromise between them; and if chaos wins art will perish.

The Convent's Narrow Room.

Miss Kate O'Brien's subject-matter, in "The Land of Spices," is a convent school in Ireland. If there is one human institution in which order still prevails it is the Roman Catholic Church, and if there is one department of that institution more than another in which rules, and obedience to rules, form an integral part of life, it is a convent. Nuns fret not at the convent's narrow room, indeed they gain spiritual support from it. Life in a convent is an outpost of order in the chaos of the modern world. I suppose there are others: a hospital, for instance, or a barracks. Both of these exist within the framework of a discipline. But discipline is only the instrument of order. The discipline of a hospital is conditioned by illness; the discipline of a barracks by preparation for the battlefield; both derive their authority, or some of their authority, from the inevitability of death. The discipline of a convent, too, aims at reconciling its inmates with death; but in the meanwhile it is a way of life, a way of getting (in the view of those who accept it) the best out of life. For the nuns, no doubt, the standards of a convent are very rigid, though varying in severity according to the Order to which the convent belongs. The more exigent the standard, I imagine, the greater the satisfaction of conforming to it; whether nuns are encouraged to indulge that kind of satisfaction, I do not know. For their pupils, at any rate in the *Compagnie de la Sainte Famille*, of which Marie-Hélène Archer was Reverend Mother, the standards, though high, were interpreted elastically; I have seldom read a school story in which, for instance, so much giggling went on. "The Land of Spices" is, in part, a school story, for it describes the childhood of Anna Murphy, six years old when she entered the convent, sixteen when she left it: a charming girl and a favourite with Reverend Mother, but not with Sister Mary Andrew, a nun with a strain of cruelty in her, the kind of snag that so often besets a favourite's path. Anna did the Convent credit; she won a coveted scholarship, and after a great deal of persuasion was allowed by her tyrannical old grandmother to keep it.

The Story.

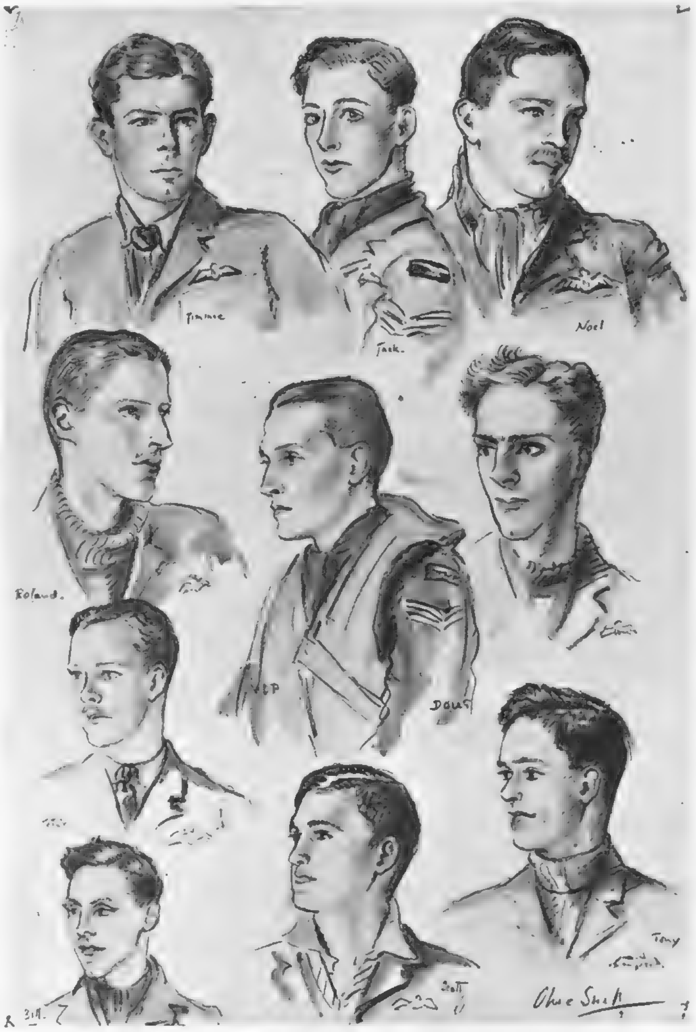
The story is about her development, and about Reverend Mother's—the latter a very different kind of progress, but one that also receives a prize. Convent life should be an ideal subject for a novelist, since its standards and traditions and the pattern of its life have not changed materially in centuries; but it has one very serious drawback. Of its nature it cannot provide a "story," much less a "plot"; the only story a convent is likely to yield would be a scandal in the bosom of the Church. Miss O'Brien's extraordinarily sensitive, sympathetic and well-informed study of convent life contains no hint of such; but she feels she must have a story, so she invents, I think unnecessarily, a scandal in the life of Reverend Mother's father, to explain why she became a nun. This sensational snippet from the past to me strikes a false note, and I could not believe in the retrospective portrait of this unfortunate man, who combined a pagan, anti-religious attitude of mind with a deep devotion for the work of George Herbert and the other English religious poets of the seventeenth century. Nor do I think it was necessary to kill off Charlie, even for the sake of hastening Anna's spiritual growth. The account of the Convent is so absorbing that we do not need violent reminders that life outside is red in tooth and claw. This want of unity makes "The Land of Spices" not entirely a success as a work of art; but it has passages of the greatest spiritual beauty and insight, and one chapter, "Chaplain's Concert," which is a masterpiece of humour. Miss O'Brien's literary style, fastidious but never precious, is one of the most distinguished possessed by any living novelist.

Another World.

"The Warrior" is not only a change of century and scene, it is like a change of planet; and to read Mr. Ryan after Miss O'Brien is to risk mental dislocation. But whether the world he portrays is less like ours than hers (inside the convent) is, I rather doubt.

The "warrior" of Mr. Ryan's title is Daxias, a Spartan mercenary soldier, who, after fighting against Alexander, and inflicting on him one of the few set-backs that great general suffered, entered his service and took part in his Indian campaign. Daxias claimed

[*Continued overleaf.*



These ten R.A.F. PILOTS *belong to the same squadron as those we published last week, who had brought down over 100 German 'planes. The two at the top right were having their portraits done at one o'clock, had their lunch and took off for France. When they came back each of them had shot down one enemy 'plane; the one on the right having chased his quarry forty miles across France.*

DRAWN BY OLIVE SNELL.

Our New Series of Colour-Plates—The Ninth Next Week.

The first of our new plates in full colour by Mr. David Wright was published in our issue of January 1, 1941, and NEXT WEEK, APRIL 16, WE ARE PRESENTING THE NINTH *of this amusing and delightful series. We decided to publish these plates in order to brighten the hours of leisure of our Naval men, soldiers and airmen, and their popularity has even exceeded our expectations. There are few wardrooms, cabins, messes and billets of serving men whose walls are not now adorned with* "DAVID WRIGHT GIRLS," *and many members of the Civil Defence Services find that these sprightly works of art help to enliven their lonely posts. We are publishing the plates loose in the numbers so that they may be removed by those who wish to pin them up.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY VANDAMM STUDIO.

"LADY IN THE DARK" FOR LONDON WHEN THE LIGHTS ARE UP AGAIN!

GERTRUDE LAWRENCE *has made an immense success in New York in "Lady in the Dark," the new Moss Hart - Kurt Weill - Ira Gerschwin musical play. At the "Carnival to Britain" Miss Lawrence had a conversation with C. B. Cochran across the Atlantic telephone. This talk was amplified and relayed across the States. During their chat, Miss Lawrence handed the rights of the London production of "Lady in the Dark" to "C. B." "on a golden plate," and author and producer joined with her in hoping he would present the show in London "when the lights are up again."*

Continued.]

to be descended from Hercules, and resembled him in going about clothed in a lion-skin, when clothed at all. In all his manifestations—as a fighter, a drinker, a lover—Daxias was heroic; and the author presents him as a demi-god, though "The Warrior" is, in other respects, a realistic historical novel. His bearing in battle is thus described—

While charges of horse swept up the hills again and again, Daxias all day long cracked Sogdian skulls, snapped necks and flung horses back down the slope all with a beautiful rhythm and economy of warrior muscles, so that if his face had not been ablaze with rage he would have seemed to be playing some easy child's game. Late in the afternoon he broke a charge of yoked bulls. . . .

Daxias did not mind taking on an elephant, a feat which in the end proved his downfall.

Two Friends. Associated but contrasted with Daxias is Kritias, a youth whose release from an unfortunate calling he believed he owed to the hero; and he was duly grateful. A coward himself, he saw in Daxias everything that he most admired, and the two entered into a close friendship which involved the cession of Timo, Kritias' wife, to Daxias.

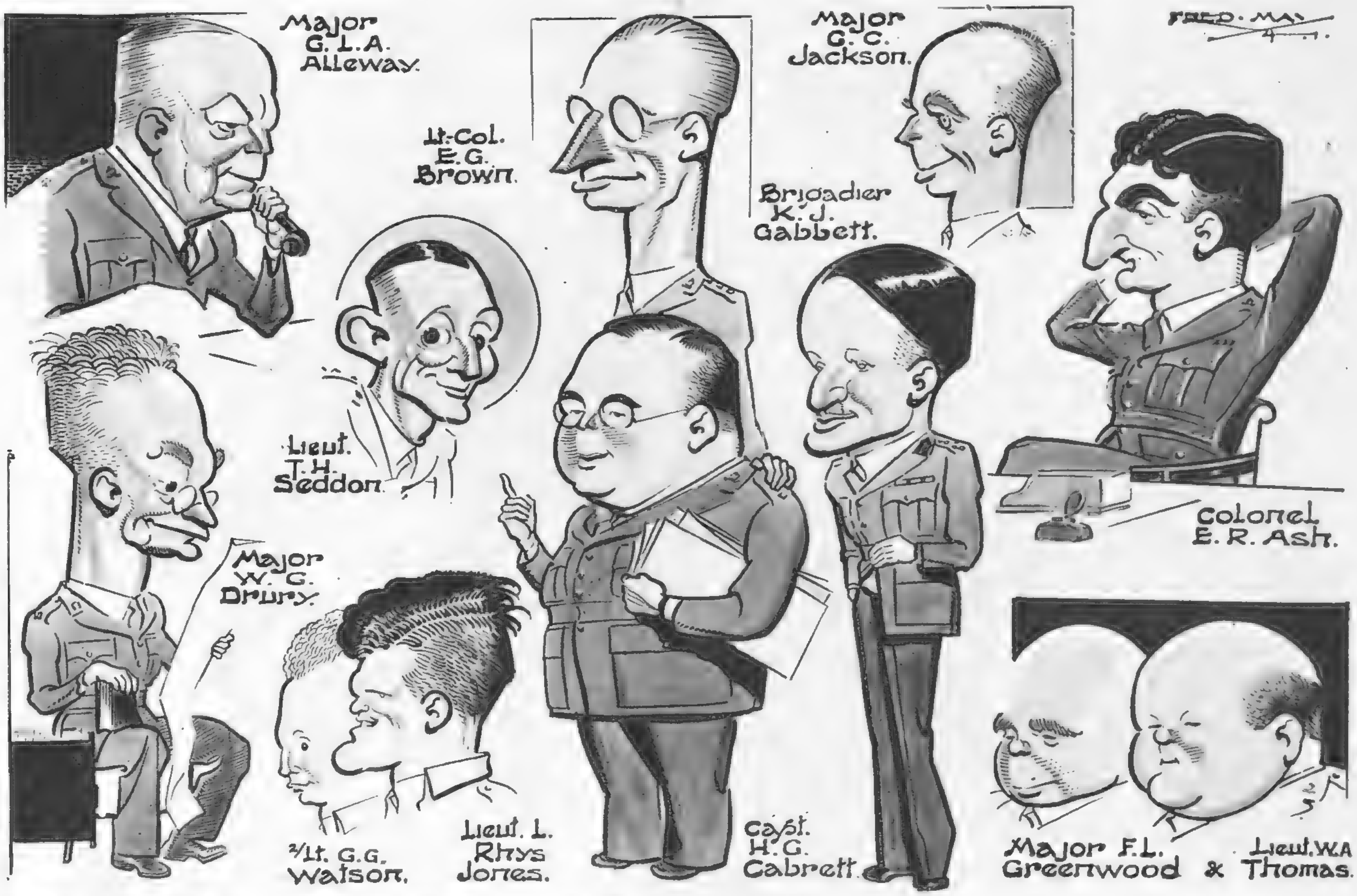
and no sense of overcrowding. "Parliament," says the wrapper, "is the product of its own history." Mr. Young's survey includes the history, and explains the product. And—what is surprising—he does not rest content with this feat of concentrated exposition; he finds room for criticism, and even for humour.

It has often been noticed [he observes] that the electorate of to-day tends more and more to vote rather for or against some outstanding personality on either side, than for any particular set of measures with which he is associated: and the wireless has immensely increased the range within which the leaders can make, or mar, their appeal to the people. This tendency is the counterpart of a general movement in European politics.

Discussing the Domestic Departments of the Government, he observes:

It would be easy to frame a more logical distribution of functions than one which brings together Aliens, Pantomime Children and Crematoria under one official roof, and Midwives and the Control of Ribbon Development under another.

It would; but our system of government is more remarkable for adaptability than for logic, and for meeting needs as they arise than for providing against contingencies which may never occur.



Brigadier K. J. Gabbett, ROYAL ARMY ORDNANCE CORPS, *is here with a few of his staff officers. This enormous branch of our fighting forces may be described, says Fred May, almost as non-combatant, but they have to fight pretty hard in other directions.* (CARICATURES BY FRED MAY.)

Of course, it wasn't at all fair to Timo to bundle her off to another man's bed when she was too drunk to notice. . . .

Kritias did not join forces with Daxias merely out of friendship; he wanted to emulate him, above all to get rid of the acute physical fear which still attacked him on the eve of battle. To trace the eradication of this fear is the most serious purpose of a story which, in spite of some absurdities, has its serious and even its impressive moments. The analysis of Daxias' character—

Daxias had never been a mere brute. He had had a conscience, but it had been overlaid with points of honour, which like so many scales of armour had kept it from being pricked,

is unexpectedly subtle and penetrating. There is so much bloodshed one comes to take it for granted; yet the final scene attains a new degree of horror, and haunts the mind long after the neck-snapping, etc., has faded from it.

How We Are Governed. There is no need to dwell on Mr. G. M. Young's gifts as a writer, but prominent among them are erudition and lucidity. His little treatise, "The Government of Britain" (in the new "Britain in Pictures" series) is masterly. Those who have fought their way through the many pages of Stubbs' "Constitutional History" will marvel, and perhaps feel a little offended, to find the subject thus triumphantly presented in a nutshell—and in large print, with frequent illustrations,

An Unlucky Heroine. It must be confessed that Mrs. Richmond did a great many unwise things, most of which were entirely natural; and she might fairly have anticipated that half of them would have passed unnoticed if the murder of a man whom she disliked had not turned a searchlight upon her. Even then she had appalling luck; her eager loyalties and her impulsive kindness were good qualities but bad counsellors, and they eventually led her into perilous places. Miss Cushman is careful to see that the reader's sympathy accompanies her, even to her greatest trial—a more moving trial-scene than most detective stories can boast of.

The early scenes in "I Wanted to Murder," before tragedy raises its head, are particularly free and natural; the murder, with its ugly train of consequences, stiffens the atmosphere and gives it a tension in which even the author seems ill at ease. But she weaves her complicated web of cross-purposes and suspicions, of evasions and concealments, with practised skill. And the *dénouement* fulfils every possible demand of the dramatic, without being more improbable than is reasonable.

BOOKS REVIEWED.

The Land of Spices. By Kate O'Brien. (*Heinemann; 8s. 6d.*)
The Warrior. By Thomas Ryan. (*Peter Davies; 9s. 6d.*)
The Government of Britain. By G. M. Young. ("Britain in Pictures" series.) (*Collins; 3s. 6d.*)
I Wanted to Murder. By Clarissa Fairchild Cushman. (*Methuen; 8s.*)

"RISE ABOVE IT," WITH HERMIONE BADDELEY.

HERMIONE BADDELEY, *waiting for the curtain to rise for the "QUEeries" act of "Rise Above It."*

"Office Hours," with HERMIONE BADDELEY *as the singing typist, surrounded by her colleagues, notebooks in hand.*

"Don't you know there's a war on?" FRITH BANBURY, AUDREY MURRAY, DAVID EVANS *and* GEORGINA COOKSON *(l. to r.).*

"RISE ABOVE IT," the revue by Hedley Briggs, with lyrics and music by Leslie Julian-Jones, who composed the music for "Come Out of Your Shell," was produced some months ago at the Q, and has recently been on tour and at Streatham, before coming to the West End. The company is headed by Hermione Baddeley and Edward Cooper, and the programme includes clever skits and witty numbers.

HERMIONE BADDELEY *with her cocker spaniel, Bags, in the dressing-room before going on.*

CITY NOTES.

OUR STROLLER IN THROGMORTON STREET.

"ANYTHING short of a ten-bob tax we look upon as a kind of concession. That is what it has come to."

"We talked about it this time last year, you may remember, but it didn't come off."

"Nothing ever comes off Income Tax. Actually, it is more of a capital levy than a tax."

"I'm not so sure about that. With a capital levy, the execution is carried out only once. Income Tax carries on: the screw is applied annually."

"Sometimes," said Our Stroller, "I am tempted to think the Government departments are beginning to realise that we are at war."

"Churchill——"

"No, I wasn't thinking of the live wires in the Cabinet. They appreciate the facts well enough. But when you see the muddle and mismanagement that go on in Government departments every day, right here and now, you do wonder at our ever getting anything done."

"Somaliland, Libya, Egypt——"

"Yes; there you are. The way those campaigns have been organised and carried out proves that we've got the best stuff in the world when it has a chance of showing what it can do. The official muddlers at home are the people who waste the time and the money and the opportunities."

"Rather sweeping, aren't you?" said the broker, suiting action to word. "Oh, hang it! Here, Smith! Come and mop up this mess, will you? I've knocked over my red-ink stand."

"Sweeping?" echoed Our Stroller. "Ask any officer, ask any gunner, ask any W.A.A.F., and they will all tell you the same story of wasted hours, money, brains, food——"

"We got a small joint of beef last Sunday," remarked the broker. "Lucky, weren't we? That means we don't arrive at sausage toad-in-the-hole until Thursday."

"Catering companies must be feeling a draught, surely."

"You'd think so, wouldn't you? I suppose the Lyons' dividend will come down?"

"That wouldn't surprise me. You need not sell the shares, though, on that account."

"Why not?" asked Our Stroller. "If the dividend falls, won't the price drop, too?"

"There might be a bit of a fall, though that's not very likely. No, Sir. What people look at to-day is the post-war prospect. If that prospect is what you can fairly consider good, you may disregard any small reduction in the dividend."

"Small, you say."

"You know as well as I do that a large reduction would make people uneasy——"

"And bring in sellers."

"Not even that, necessarily. But it would make buyers hang back, and leave the market without support after the bears had got their stock. See what I mean?"

"You don't look for a fall in the price of the shares then, if a dividend happens to be cut down?"

"I can't do more than give you our experience of what happens. You can check it for yourself by watching results in the papers."

"We were surprised at first," the partner added, "to see how little effect a lesser dividend had upon prices. But it's quite true what Old Sere and Yellow says——"

"I beg your pardon!"

"What my honourable though white-haired fellow-victim relates is correct enough. Clients know that taxation has run away with their dividends, and they won't sell unless the gross profits are materially down."

"But then you don't find many shares come in for sale. We are developing a post-war mind——"

"Things you would like to get rid of," a dealer in the Oil Market was declaring, "are too low to make it worth while chucking out. The rest of your assets are too good to make them worth selling at a time when you'd find it difficult to get alternatives as good but cheaper."

"With the result," said a fellow-jobber, "that nobody does anything, and we in here are a distressed area."

"Most of us are out of employment only in working-hours," replied the first speaker. "There can't be many chaps in the House who are not doing something or other—A.R.P., Fire Service, Specials—towards the war effort."

"I've been helping in our War Weapons Week."

Our Stroller was staring at the little crimson bulb that lit up in response to a ringing of bells. "What is that for?" he asked.

"To tell you that a dividend announcement is coming through on the machines. See! The Translux strips are showing a feeble green colour. If you watch, you will see a dividend come along. There's the start of it."

"I hope it's one of my companies," Our Stroller laughed. "I am trying hard to live on a very reduced income; to refrain from breaking into my depreciated capital, and to put every dividend I receive into Defence Threes. Is that a sound policy? What on earth is that row? It reminds me of an ancient watchman's rattle we used to play with at my grandfather's."

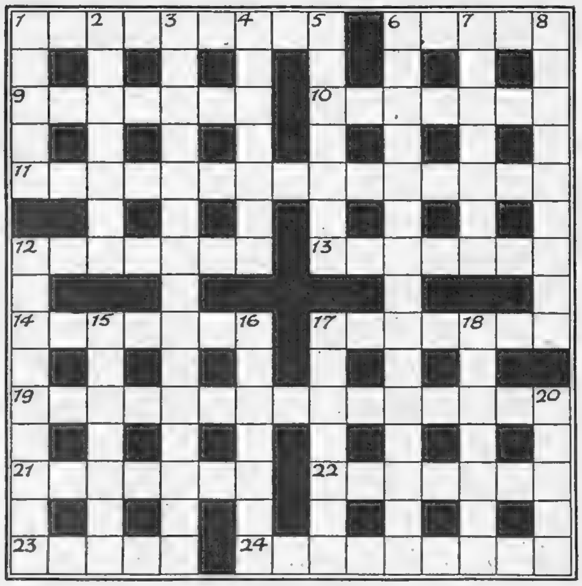
"That," said the broker, "is the rattle which tells us that now the Stock Exchange day is over. Come and meet some Home Guards at tea. They will be interested in your financial war policy, and I'm sure that some of them will want to follow it."

"But you yourself——"

"This is the best way out," said the broker politely.

Friday, April 4, 1941.

"THE SKETCH" CROSS-WORD.



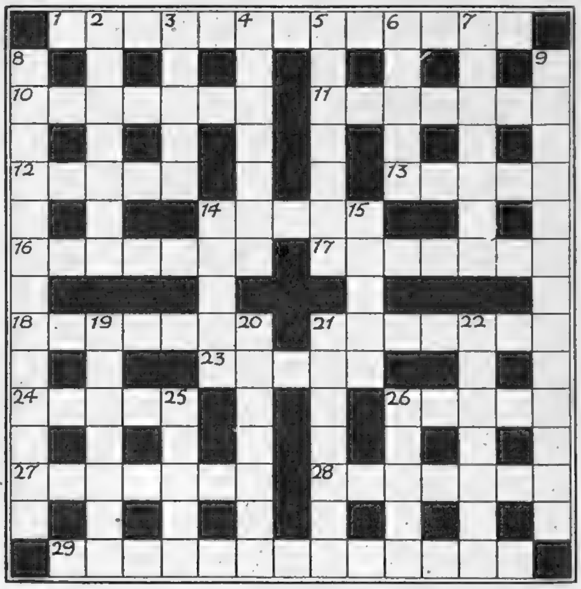
ACROSS.

1. Almost without a mark (9).
6. Jewish month (5).
9. The cricketer collects into a heap with the donkey's aid (7).
10. Sphere (7).
11. Often found to an unusual extent in children (15).
12. Where waters meet (7).
13. Girl's name (7).
14. Industrious worker finally crying earnestly (7).
17. Fish with weapon as tail (7).
19. So he wouldn't talk! (15).
21. Crest of feathers (7).
22. Did this Roman emperor visit the barber frequently? (7).
23. Man who gives medicine (5).
24. Fill with unfriendliness (9).

DOWN.

1. Foreign soldier (5).
2. Though somewhat unfeeling, the girl and her fellow finish up over a friendly cup (7).
3. Largely responsible for the maintenance of the beds (two words; 8, 7).
4. The enthusiasm started in the city (7).
5. Constable (7).
6. Discretion is this valour (four words; 3, 6, 4, 2).
7. The lady departed (two words; 3, 4).
8. "It eats ten" (anag.) (9).
12. Epithet for that steak-and-kidney pie? (9).
15. Agrees to (7).
16. Ventured confidently (7).
17. Gratings, but not of the culinary type (7).
18. To this is to flatter (7).
20. A somewhat mixed welcome: in fact—the "bird" (5).

"THE SKETCH" DIFFICULT CROSS-WORD.



ACROSS.

1. Coals you have never seen in a pack (two words; 5, 8).
10. Order of The Bath? (7).
11. Forgive and make the sailor get out the result (7).
12. In Dickens, tobacco gives one a turn (5).
13. According to "Alice," they gyre and gimble in the wabe (5).
14. A fight after a round may mean speaking roughly (5).
16. Hadn't the decency to say thank you (7).
17. South American town (7).
18. The sort of censure to apply to an old mack (7).
21. Die (7).
23. Colour to criticise severely (5).
24. Bring on oneself (5).
26. Adapt a term for a near relative (5).
27. Such rank is very high (7).
28. Such farming as you'd scarcely expect from an old convict in a silk hat (7).
29. A handshake after fighting isn't enough for a children's game, apparently (four words; 4, 2, 3, 4).

DOWN.

2. Digs (7).
3. Device indicating a hill-top (5).
4. 10 Across (7).
5. As they say in the Army, acting and unpaid (7).
6. Here there is plenty of change for notes (5).
7. What carriers do—and free, too! (7).
8. One-act play contrary to A.R.P.? (7 hyphen 6).
9. A towel-horse scarcely enters into this category (three words; 5, 2, 6).
14. A host in himself, according to Dumas (5).
15. Quote wrongly (5).
19. My error, but not in English (7).
20. Where King James the Fourth died (7).
21. Will make things go farther (7).
22. It won't run you down (two words; 2, 5).
25. Demands on your purse that make you stare (5).
26. Look up in ruin for a tooth (5).

PEACEMAKER FOR FEUDING COMEDIANS.

MARY MARTIN *is one of the stars of* "LOVE THY NEIGHBOUR," *new Paramount picture, due for its première at the Plaza on April 11. She plays Mary Allen, niece of comedian Fred Allen, who is running a feud with comedian Jack Benny. Their encounters include a car-bumping contest, in which one vehicle is reduced to junk; some sharp work in hiring away a clever quartet, the Merry Macs; a collision in motor-boats, and other fun and games, but in the end Mary acts as Miss Makepeace by marrying Jack Benny and settling the last big dispute about the ownership of a show.*

CIRCUMSTANCES.*

By DONALD LANDELS HENDERSON.

I DON'T know whether you ever disagree with conventional sayings and theories and ideas, or with advice, perhaps even the most sensible-sounding advice, which is being forcefully given you by one possessed of the most sensible-sounding views. After all, why shouldn't you? Strong convictions are bound to be but personal opinions formed from personal experiences, aren't they?

For example, *I* state the opinion just mentioned, because it is the result of *my* experiences.

But there! That 's only me! And I 'm only a poor bally secretary. One of the henpecked type, I don't mind admitting. Well, I 've been ragged so often at the office about letting myself be put upon. Oh, I know all about the poor little bowler-hatted chap with glasses who 's so meek and all that, but I don't know as I 'm particularly ashamed. We can't all be so wonderful and so strong.

And what is strength, anyway! When I think of the strong men, like Adolf and them, well, all said and done, look where it 's got them! My boss is decidedly a strong man, as you 'd say—*I 'll* say—but where has it got him? You want to see the drawing as a whole, don't you?

But I mustn't start backwards, must I? I suppose that 's another weakness. "Being hesitant," Mr. Barklay would no doubt call it. "You 're so damned hesitant, Gorold," Mr. Barklay said to me once. He said it in his rudest way, shouting at me, if you know what I mean, yet not exactly *shouting*.

He 'd get red and put on the kind of face which seemed to make the worm at last decide to turn. Honestly, it was one of those bally moments when all the hundreds of little humiliating incidents down all the years I 'd served him so loyally and faithfully as his humble private secretary seemed to add themselves up and become one inflamed moment in that yellow office, and suddenly I knew darned well I had it in me to murder the old gentleman.

Yes, I 'm not exaggerating. I 'm trembling even now: which is another thing you might find it hard to agree with—that a nervous and respectable and outwardly harmless little man could go and commit the capital crime, much less get away with it.

Yet, when you look at it, murder has always been done by quite ordinary chaps like me, or even you. I don't know what there is about murder that makes it seem possible only in a book. It 's so silly, to my way of thinking. But there, as I say: that 's only me!

Well, I 'm still larking about, so to speak, and not getting on with it, but you mustn't think I 'm a writer. I 'm just Mr. Barklay's private secretary—well, *am*; *was*, in a few minutes' time it 'll be. I never received any notice; I suppose there 's been too much else to think about. Any old how, in a few minutes more it 'll be 9 a.m. I 'm not at the office. As a matter of fact, I 'm taking it easy in bed. I 've got quite a chill. Well, you can't get about quickly these dark nights, can you? Ages since I had a day off, bar the trial, and it seems funny not to be in that yellow room in the familiar building in Wardour Street, Mr. Barklay's buzzer going, and his "Come along, Gorold. You 're getting slower and slower! What 's the matter with you? Take this down. 'Dear Sir—Unless . . .'" The letters he wrote which started like that! I reckon he 's a sadist, or whatever the word is—*you* know. I 'd feel so sorry for the ones who had to receive them: who doesn't know what it 's like to get a letter like that of a morning, just when the sun 's shining and the birds are singing.

Mr. Barklay was quite merciless, though; no sympathy, you know. Oh, hundreds of cruel *little* things he did in a day, or so I thought. I mean, it *is* the little things which tot up and become cruel and big, isn't it?

"You have to be hard, Gorold. *Never* be soft. You have to be crushed—or crush. Why don't you learn to take advice? Always look after Number One! How many times have I told you?" Then he 'd say, "Take this down. 'Dear Sir—Unless . . .'"

So I 'd take it down. You 've got to live, haven't you? And there 's Maria and the girl and the boy. You have to watch your bread and butter, don't you? Oh, it may be weak. I leave that to you—I couldn't say, I 'm sure. When you get no pension, any old how.

Oh, what a fine thing—financial independence! Imagine! Your own little bit of dough coming in regular every week out of capital—say, three quid a week!

And no office! My!

Well, about this little story. You 'll probably think it 's nothing much, but it 's a lot to me, murder is.

What I 'm trying to say is this: *I* consider—I 've done so for years—well—ages; it 's just my view—that *there are occasions in life when circumstances are stronger than we are.*

I don't care what you say, in the same way I didn't care what Mr. Barklay said. Of course, I had to be respectful in saying it to him, but—I dunno; somehow I was just about at the end of my tether with him when he came out so unpleasantly with his remark about every man being entirely responsible for his own actions and conduct, his own success or failure, and so on.

I forget what actually started it—oh, yes: I 'd absent-mindedly chucked away a spool of films he wanted kept. Well, the darned paper-basket had always been used for letter-carbons, as you might use a tray, and I argued that but for the circumstance of this, and my not being told, I 'd never have dropped the spool in the basket. Feeble, I suppose, but that 's what happened.

Anyway, he wouldn't have that. He was in a fine state, I can tell you. He went at me something cruel—I was this and I was that. "There was no *shadow* of excuse, Gorold. Where would *I* have been, Gorold, if I 'd been the kind to make excuses like that? You 're a blethering fool! Get out!"

"Yes, Mr. Barklay, and I 'm most sorry——"

"It 's no good being sorry. It 's no good excusing a fault. There *are* no excuses."

He told me he was more fed up with me than he 'd ever been and I was to clear out.

I reckon I was trembling.

Now, you 'll think that was quite a small thing, and no doubt it seems so. But you 'll understand I 'd had *years* of it. Oh, I dunno. Anyway, it was the first thing.

The next thing was immediately afterwards. Barklay and Co. go in for everything to do with photography and films, especially these new home-cinema things you just hold and point at your kids in the holidays and then throw on to a screen in the drawing-room after Christmas dinner.

Well, one morning I have to show in one of Mr. Barklay's fancy pieces—not but what I can't tell you much about that subject, my being his confidential secretary, can I? I 'll just say this was a beautiful bit of stuff who 'd come to say Ta-ta, as I see it, for it had been me who was sent for her ticket to Africa that same day. And I 'll just say Mrs. Barklay was one of the best, the kind of lady you 'd love to help get her freedom so 's she could marry somebody decent. Lots of girls marry too young, don't they?

Anyway, I showed in this woman and I was sitting in my outer office, and all at once I heard Mr. Barklay's shout:

"*Gorold! Gorold!*"

[*Continued on page* 64.

* *All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

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THE WILL TO WIN . .

is firmly rooted in the hearts of the brave men of H.M. Forces who, day after day, defend us from the common enemy.

THE WILL TO HELP . .

is evident in these difficult yet significant days. Many kind friends have answered generously our call for **More Church Army Centres, More Church Army Mobile Canteens, More Church Army Hostels.**

Will you, too, help us to build and maintain still more Recreation Centres, Canteens and Hostels, for the comfort and happiness of your own and others' sons?

Everything you give, however little, however much, will enable us to bring comfort and friendliness to the men of the Navy, Army and Air Force.

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GOOD CAUSES FOR YOUR EASTER THANK-OFFERINGS.

The British Prisoners of War Fund.

This year Easter calls for special thanksgiving by all who have been preserved through the dangers of this trying winter. They could hardly be better expressed than by a gift to the cause of lightening the monotony of life for our 44,000 prisoners of war in enemy hands, many of whom are starting their second year of captivity. The British Prisoners of War Fund has done splendid work in sending regular monthly parcels of books and games to prisoners. Their gratitude is immense. John Casson, son of Dame Sybil Thorndike, has written about the magnificent library that has been collected at his prison camp, and speaks of the admirable books provided by the Fund. Another prisoner writes that the books are "superb and a great joy." For 5s. a month, regular parcels can be dispatched to one prisoner. Donations should be sent to Miss Christine Knowles, Founder and Director, or Sir Hugh Walpole, Chairman, Carrington House, Hertford Street, W.1.

The Church Army.

To help the Armed Forces of the Crown to victory, the Church Army is supporting by spiritual and material means all men and women in the Services, wherever they may be. They work by means of centres in and outside camps, mobile canteens and Services clubs. Mobile canteens are being supplied to the Middle East, and two large centres, each costing £2000, are authorised for Palestine. Mobile canteens do double work, for the lonely men in the Forces, and for air-raid sufferers. Cheques for this splendid work should be sent to Prebendary Carlile, C.H., D.D., 55, Bryanston Street, W.1.

The N.S.P.C.C.

The work of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children is one of the good causes which must never be forgotten. During the past year, over one hundred thousand children were helped; for cruelty, ignorance and carelessness cause intense suffering among the infant population of this country, and many children, unfortunately, still live in neglectful homes. Gifts should be sent to the Director, N.S.P.C.C., Victory House, Leicester Square, W.C.2.

The Delights of Childhood

ARE A CHILD'S BIRTHRIGHT

Yet there are children, victims of callous indifference and brutal neglect, to whom real happiness is a hollow mockery.

Since the N.S.P.C.C. began its work 56 years ago more than 5,000,000 such children have been rescued from a life of misery and ill-treatment.

Children are still being made to suffer to-day. We still have to fight that most evil of all our enemies—cruelty. Please help to continue the fight, to bring to every child its birthright—Happiness.

Your gift will be gratefully received by Sir G. W. Truscott, Bart., Hon. Treasurer,

N·S·P·C·C

NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

Victory House, Leicester Square, W.C.2.

Please remember the Society by will.

The WAR and HOMELESS CHILDREN

Where do we go now?

THE SOCIETY CAN PROVIDE THE ANSWER WITH **YOUR HELP**

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OVER 5000 CHILDREN TO FEED AND CLOTHE EVERY DAY

Donations urgently needed

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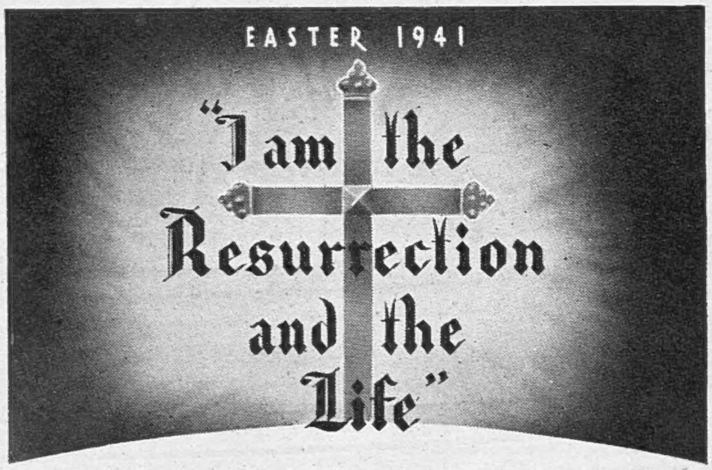

THE VOICE OF HUMANITY APPEALS FOR HELP FOR CANCER SUFFERERS

Every Eastertide brings with it the thought of one who suffered gladly for humanity released from that suffering at long last. To-day the cross of cruel affliction is borne without complaint by thousands of Cancer sufferers. It is difficult for us to ignore the mute appeal of their plight, but costly equipment and supplies tax our resources to the utmost, and we cannot assist as many as we would wish. If only you can help. Please send a special Easter Gift to the Secretary,

The Royal Cancer Hospital

(FREE)

FULHAM ROAD LONDON, S.W.3

CIRCUMSTANCES.—(*Continued from page 60.*)

Startled, I hurried in, and to my astonishment the lady was swooning in Mr. Barklay's arms, so to speak. He 'd been showing her one of our ciné-cameras, and he was trying to hold her and it from falling, both being valuable, as you might say.

I seized the camera and stood holding it, and the machine was running all the time. You can guess the result—yes, *quite* a pretty picture: innocent, really, yet not on the face of it. I mean, a lovely lady of *her* kind in the arms of a married man! I can tell you, suitably cut, it made *quite* a film story when I tried it out later. In fact, I was so impressed I printed it and had several spools done. At the time, of course, I had only thoughts about what to do for a fainting lady. Men are slow and helpless at times like that.

To cut out the details, I came to my decision pretty quickly. I put it to Mr. Barklay like this:

"It 's like this, Sir," I said. "It 's not only that I know you can well spare a thousand pound. It 's something more than that, though money *is* important in these uncertain times, and I get no pension, do I? What I 'm out to prove is that there *are* occasions in life when perfectly innocent circumstances can completely master even the best of us." I told him what he 'd said about that had rankled. "Moreover, Sir," I said quietly, "one thing usually leads to another. We poor mortals can't always be masters of our fates."

You should have seen his face! He was green.

I forget all he said. He tore the spool up, of course, but I 'd allowed for that, as I told him. He was very nasty to me.

"Anyhow, Mr. Barklay," I said finally, "if I can't convince you of my theory, I 'll have the thousand pounds. Let 's call it in lieu of pension, or inadequate wages, and in one-pound notes. Shall we say at your house this time to-morrow? It 's early, and Mrs. Barklay 'll sure to be in," I hinted. "Though I hope we shan't need to trouble her."

In the morning I called at the house where he lived—I knew it well—and Mrs. Barklay herself let me in, poor soul. A sadder face I never saw. And then she vanished, and I was in the study—well, alone with Mr. Barklay.

The thousand pounds in notes was in an open case on the table. I cannot describe to you the contending forces battling for expression on Mr. Barklay's pallid face. He was sweating.

Yet it seemed I hadn't judged my man *too* perfectly. Once a man like that parts with cash like that it does something to him, and just as I was about to go he pulled out a gun and took a pot at me. Unhinged, I suppose. But he missed, and the shot went through the open window and hit a policeman.

The copper was dead when we reached the pavement.

Mighty soon it came out that Mr. Barklay and this particular copper had had many a row about licences, and lights showing in the black-out, and I can tell you I wasn't the only one to testify to Mr. Barklay's uncontrollable temper. "I reckon he 's mad," I said, but nobody seemed to support me in that.

"Malice," they said of him at the trial.

There was so little evidence, you see, really. I 'd gone and burned the spools, in my careless way. And a certain lady was in Africa. And a thousand pounds he kept talking about—well, where was it? As for all the things he said about me—well, they didn't seem to cut much ice when Mrs. B. was in the witness-box. She 'd always liked me.

Mr. Barklay was sentenced to be hanged the following Dec. 10, at nine o'clock.

It 's just nine now.

And it 's murder, really, as I see it. I dunno: I suppose I could have saved him, but I 've been thinking. I 've been saying to Maria and the girl and boy, perhaps we *are* masters of our fate, *always*. Yes, I reckon I was wrong saying that about circumstances to Mr. Barklay.

And I reckon, too, there *are* no excuses and a man *ought* to be ready to take advice. Why not?

"Look after Number One," he 'd advised, and somehow or other, with the clock striking nine, I 've come round to his view. I reckon there 's nothing to be ashamed of in seeing your fault, and in admitting it.

But there! That 's only me! [THE END.

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